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PLACEMENT IN THE JUNIOR AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

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DESCRIPTORS- *JUNIOR COLLEGES, *EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, *EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, JOB PLACEMENT, SURVEYS, RESEARCH NEEDS,

OF 136 RETURNS FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF 151 JUNIOR COLLEGES, 100 INDICATED THE EXISTENCE OF A FULL-TIME PLACEMENT SERVICE, WITH "LIMITED" SERVICE IN THE OTHER COLLEGES. AMONG THE COLLEGES WITH COMPLETE SERVICES, (1) IN 83, THE PLACEMENT FUNCTIONS WERE CENTRALIZED UNDER ONE ADMINISTRATOR, (2) APPROXIMATELY HALF OF THE ADMINISTRATORS REPORTED TO THE DEAN OF STUDENT SERVICES, (3) HALF OF THE ADMINISTRATORS WORKED AT LEAST HALF TIME IN PLACEMENT, (4) CAREER GUIDANCE AND VOCATIONAL PLANNING ASSISTANCE RECEIVE LITTLE EMPHASIS, AND RESEARCH AND FOLLOWUP STUDIES ARE LACKING. COMMON PROBLEMS INCLUDED LACK OF BUDGET, STAFF, FACILITIES, AND EXPERTISE. THERE WAS NEED FOR GREATER SUPPORT FROM FACULTY, COMMUNITY, EMPLOYERS AND TOP ADMINISTRATION. THE AUTHOR CONCLUDED THAT PLACEMENT SERVICES WERE NOT ADEQUATELY INTEGRATED INTO THE TOTAL COLLEGE PROGRAM AND WERE IN NEED OF FOLLOWUP RESEARCH AND CLARIFICATION OF PURPOSES. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN THE "JOURNAL OF COLLEGE PLACEMENT," VOLUME 27, NUMBER 3, FEBRUARY-MARCH 1967. (WO)

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Placement in the JUNIOR and COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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INFORMATION

Highlights of a special study assessing the type and extent of placement services at a selected number of institutions.

As THE junior and community college has continued to expand facilities to include more and more students, the need for improved campus placement services has magnified. Increasing numbers of two-year colleges — coupled with the concurrent demand by business, industry, and government for college-trained manpower — has placed junior college placement offices in the spotlight.

This past year an assessment was made of the type and extent of college placement activities on a selected number of two-year campuses. The findings were set forth in a research study report to Dr. Raymond J. Young, director, Community and Junior College Administrative Institute, The Center for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Michigan. It is interesting to note some of the highlights of this study which will benefit countless junior college officials, placement directors, employers, and researchers in the field of higher education.

In April 1966 questionnaires were mailed to the presidents of 151 two-year colleges with full-time student enrollments of more than 1,000 and less than 10,000. Approximately 80 per cent of the survey sample had student enrollments between 1,000 and 3,000; 15 per cent between 3,000 and 5,000; and 5 per cent between 5,000 and 10,000. Institutions were

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selected from current listings in the *Junior College Directory*.

The questionnaire was divided into two distinct parts. Part I was related to how the placement service was financed, organized, administered, and serviced. Part II dealt with narrative responses to questions about the importance of placement, the attitude of placement officials toward the establishment of regional placement associations, and the major problems connected with establishment of campus placement services.

RETURNS, ALL USEABLE, were received from 136 junior and community colleges in 26 states for a 90 per cent response. Public institutions accounted for 89.7 per cent of the response and private colleges 10.3 per cent. Only 100 colleges responding (73.5 per cent) reported having ongoing, full-time job placement services for their students. This group included 91 public and 9 private colleges from 21 states. The New England-Middle Atlantic region contained 25 colleges, the South 14, the North Central region 14, and the West had 47.

The remaining 36 respondents (26.5 per cent), reported limited placement services for their students. In a few of these colleges, no one individual was singled out as having responsibility for "limited" placement; the services generally amounted to posting of notices for part-time student jobs. One or two colleges indicated that actual referral of students and graduates to full-time jobs was the joint responsibility of interested faculty members, counselors in other student personnel areas, and part-timers on the administrative staff. The 36 colleges without full-time placement were comprised of 31 public and 5 private colleges from 15 states. For enrollments, 32 of these colleges had between 1,000 and 3,000, and 4 colleges between 3,000 and 5,000.

Data provided by the 100 colleges with full-time placement provides the following facts:

1. 90 per cent report that their college placement facility is being supported, staffed, and financed with institutional funds. The remaining 10 per cent are staffed, financed, and supported primarily by the state employment services — affiliated with the United States Employment Service.

2. 83 per cent operate their placement program under a centralized operation with a single administrator in command. Of the remaining 17 colleges, 12 have a decentralized set-up with several persons handling placement under the coordination of one individual. Five of the colleges have two or more persons responsible for their placement program — without any centralized authority.

3. 51 per cent of the respondents list the dean of students as the person to whom the chief placement official reports, 18 per cent report to the president of the college, and 8 per cent to both the academic dean and the counseling and guidance dean of the college.

4. A slim 53 per cent spend more than half of their time on placement duties, 40 respondents spend 76-100 per cent, 13 spend 51-75 per cent, 25 spend 26-50 per cent, and 22 spend 25 per cent or less time. Among the 40 who devote full time to placement, 27 (67.5 per cent) are located in the West, and 10 (25 per cent) are in the New England-Middle Atlantic. California colleges account for 23 of the 27 colleges in the West, and New York accounts for 4 of the 10 colleges in their region.

5. 75 per cent of the placement directors hold advanced degrees; 63 per cent of these have at least a master's degree.

6. Career guidance and vocational planning assistance are services provided by less than half of the 100 colleges with full-time placement. 28 per cent report that such services are considered of minor importance. The obvious lack of placement research or graduate follow-up is apparent on many two-year campuses. In 16 per cent of the colleges, little or no follow-up is attempted.

7. 97 per cent of the 136 respondents firmly believe that junior college placement will become increasingly important. Many cite the growing pressures from students, faculty members, *and* employers. The numerical count on this particular question reflects overwhelming support of the belief that junior colleges are keyed to satisfying local community needs and that the pressure for improved placement service will come from outside the campus.

8. The majority of respondents were inclined to favor the establishment of regional placement associations patterned after existing organizations of four-year institutions.

9. In summation, the most frequently mentioned problems encountered in establishing effective placement services were: lack of budget; lack of staff and facilities; lack of sufficient know-how; lack of support from faculty, community, employers, and top administration. A number of respondents felt that their administration did not really accept the position of the American Association of Junior Colleges, that placement should be considered an integral part of the educational process. Others felt that the lack of information about students, graduates, and alumni was a major factor in preventing advocates of improved placement from overcoming opposition. The lack of follow-up studies was also felt to be a strong factor in accounting for lack of understanding and support from employers and members of the local community. Still, some believe that "no real problems exist" and "the situation couldn't be better."

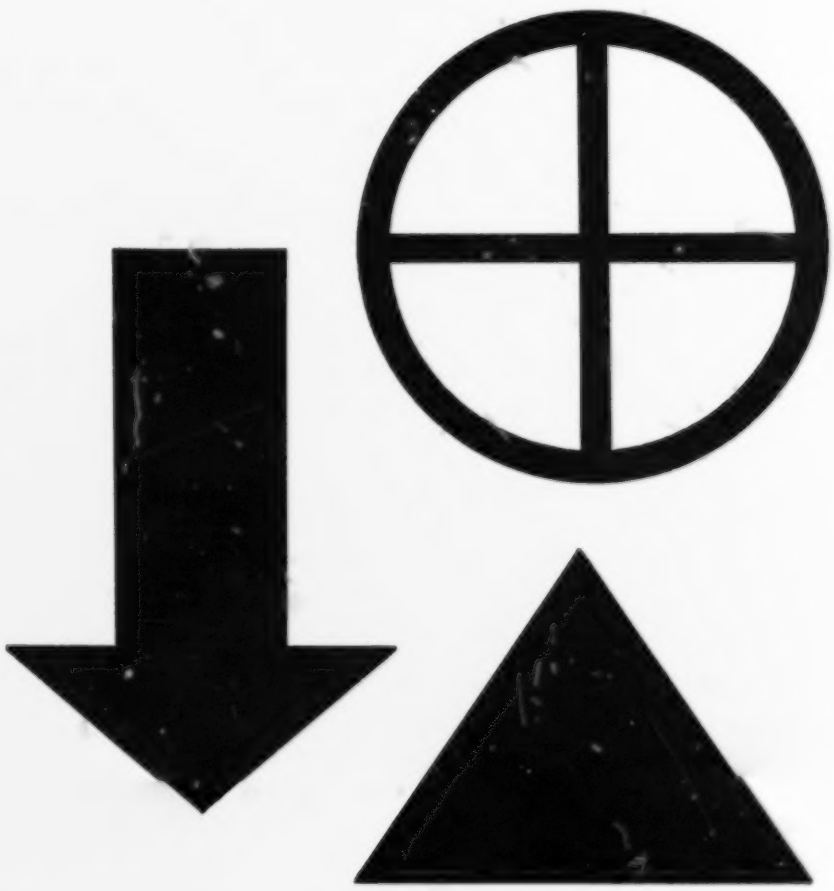
EVIDENCE FROM this survey indicates overwhelmingly that much re-

THE AUTHOR

Arthur Eckberg has gained recognition not only for his efforts at Roosevelt University, but for the active role he has played in numerous organizations in the field of placement.

A graduate of Roosevelt University and the University of Michigan, Mr. Eckberg joined Roosevelt as admissions counselor and field representative in 1954. A year later, he organized the first full-time career planning and placement office at the university.

The immediate past-president of the Midwest College Placement Association, Mr. Eckberg currently serves as a member of the MCPA Executive Board. He also represents MCPA as its college representative to the College Placement Council and has made two trips as a member of a College Placement Services visitation team. Mr. Eckberg is also a past president of the Illinois Association for School, College & University Staffing.



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mains to be accomplished in order to integrate placement into the educational process on many campuses. The implications of this study are not limited to placement officials; junior college administrators need to evaluate the ways in which they determine their institutional placement philosophies, their expectations of the results desired from placement, and the responsibilities they assign and associate with college placement.

Placement directors themselves need to evaluate their present practices in light of AAJC-accepted-and-recommended placement services. While many of their services tend to parallel those outlined by AAJC, generally the area of career guidance and counseling appears to be neglected. The size of a particular college does not seem to pre-determine any particular placement pattern. A pressing need exists for placement follow-up research on the status of junior college graduates. Community resources, especially local employers, should be utilized more extensively in helping to effectuate placement organization or improvement.

Most importantly, placement cannot continue to operate in a vacuum or independently of the faculty. To be really effective, placement needs to be accepted by faculty members, administrators, students, and employers. Faculty support especially will contribute much to successful campus and community operation.●

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This particular study was undertaken at the request of Dr. Raymond J. Young, director, Community and Junior College Administrative Institute, The Center for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Michigan.

Acknowledgement is also given to Dr. Frank S. Endicott, Northwestern University, for his encouragement toward undertaking of the research, and for his assistance in drafting the survey instrument.

Roosevelt University was very cooperative in providing sufficient leave time for the accomplishment of the entire study.

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